
IRAN RAILWAYS: AZERBAIJAN ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR FORMATION

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The cooperation between the railways of Azerbaijan and Iran within the International North-South Transport Corridor project, as well as the increasing transit revenues of the two countries create favorable conditions for the further development of the non-oil sector in both countries.

Iran Railways and Azerbaijan Railways have beneficial cooperation, said Saeid Rasouli, President of Iran Railways.

He added that Azerbaijan Railways is involved in the implementation of infrastructure projects in Iran's Astara. In his words, Azerbaijan Railways continues construction of a railway station and a cargo terminal in Astara.

Azerbaijan Railways will build four terminals in the Iranian city of Astara. These terminals include oil and grain terminals, a terminal for processing containers and a general-purpose terminal.

A cargo terminal was built in Irans Astara with the support of Azerbaijan in the first quarter of this year. The Azerbaijani side took the terminal for a 25-year lease. The capacity of the terminal, built as part of the North-South project, is 2 million tons annually, and it is planned to be increased to 5 million tons in the future.

Azerbaijan is actively participating in the complete formation of the International North-South Transport Corridor, Rasouli said.

He further stressed that as a result of this cooperation, the border regions of Iran and Azerbaijan will integrate into economic development. Thousands of jobs have been created on both sides, helping improve the welfare of the population.

Rasouli went on to note that as a result of cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan in the railway sector, Asia and Europe will be united in terms of railway transportation.

Asian countries will gain access to Europe, and European countries, in turn, will get access to Persian Gulf coast and Southeast Asia. This will give impetus to the trade and economic development of both continents, he said.

The projects implemented by Azerbaijan and Iran, designed to integrate regional transport networks, will increase the competitiveness of International North-South Transport Corridor as well

as deepen the relations in the regional format.

North-South transport route envisages connecting India with the Middle East and the Caucasus, Central Asia and Europe. The project aims to increase the efficiency of transport communications in the organization of freight and passenger transportation, to assist in increasing the volume of international transportations.

Within the North-South corridor, Astara-Rasht-Qazvin railway project envisages the construction of a new railway line in Iran, which will connect Astara (Azerbaijan) to the Iranian cities of Astara, Rasht and Qazvin, as well as the reconstruction of the existing railway in Azerbaijan.

Qazvin-Rasht line section has already been commissioned. The construction of the Rasht-Astara line will be completed in the next two years, thus the railway systems of Iran and Azerbaijan will be connected.

Recently, Azerbaijan, Russia and Iran have agreed to set up a working group to eliminate infrastructure restrictions and remove administrative barriers in the transportation of people and goods along the western route of the North-South corridor.

The cooperation between Azerbaijan and Iran on customs also contributes to expanding the transit potential of both countries and increasing the competitiveness of international transport.

The e-TIR international system aims to ensure the secure exchange of data between national customs systems related to the international transit of goods, vehicles or containers according to the provisions of the TIR Convention and to allow customs to manage the data on guarantees, issued by guarantee chains to holders authorized to use the TIR system.

The first phase of Iran-Azerbaijan e-TIR project officially started on May 22, 2019.

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